United Nations S/PV.6627

# Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

*Provisional*

**6627**th meeting

Tuesday, 4 October 2011, 6 p.m.

New York

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *President:* | Mrs. Ogwu | (Nigeria) |
| *Members:* | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Mr. Barbalić |
| | Brazil | Mrs. Viotti |
| | China | Mr. Li Baodong |
| | Colombia | Mr. Osorio |
| | France | Mr. Araud |
| | Gabon | Mr. Moungara Moussotsi |
| | Germany | Mr. Wittig |
| | India | Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri |
| | Lebanon | Mr. Salam |
| | Portugal | Mr. Moraes Cabral |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Churkin |
| | South Africa | Mr. Sangqu |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Sir Mark Lyall Grant |
| | United States of America | Ms. Rice |

## Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

11-52974 (E)

Please recycle

*The meeting was called to order at 6.20 p.m.*

**Expression of thanks to the outgoing President**

**The President**: As this is the first meeting of the Council for the month of October 2011, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Nawaf Salam, Permanent Representative of Lebanon, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of September 2011. I am sure I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Salam and his delegation for the great diplomatic skill with which they conducted the Council's business last month.

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**The situation in the Middle East**

**The President**: Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2011/612, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France, Germany, Portugal and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

*A vote was taken by a show of hands.*

*In favour*:

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, France, Gabon, Germany, Nigeria, Portugal, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

*Against*:

China, Russian Federation

*Abstentions*:

Brazil, India, Lebanon, South Africa

**The President**: There were 9 votes in favour, 2 votes against and 4 abstentions. The draft resolution has not been adopted, owing to the negative vote of a permanent member of the Council.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

**Mr. Araud** (France) (*spoke in French*): I would of course first like to very warmly commend the Permanent Representative of Lebanon, who held the presidency of the Security Council for the month of September, for the enormously effective and courageous manner in which he carried out his duties. I would also like to congratulate you, Madame President, on having assumed your duties as President of the Council.

More than 2,700 civilian victims and tens of thousands of protesters held in Syrian prisons, more than 10,000 Syrian refugees in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan — that is the terrible toll on which the Syrian authorities can pride themselves since the beginning of the demonstrations, early in March. That is the terrible toll that some around this table today have still refused to condemn.

Since May, we have worked unrelentingly to bring about a response from the Security Council. Our objective was simple and remains so: to stop the brutal crackdown by the Syrian regime against its own people, who are legitimately demanding to exercise their most fundamental rights. This would create an atmosphere free of violence and intimidation and thus allow for the emergence of an inclusive political process led by and for the Syrian people.

To that end, France has assumed its responsibilities at the national and European levels. The European Union has adopted numerous series of sanctions against those responsible for the violence and the measures that have allowed the repression to continue. At the same time, diplomatic efforts continued against the Damascus regime. Those efforts were extensive and included those made by members of the Security Council. The Syrian authorities have remained deaf to those efforts. Faced with the extreme violence being brought against a population demanding to exercise their rights; faced with the deafness of the Syrian authorities; and confronted with the risk of regional instability, a united response from the international community was, and continues to be, necessary. The Security Council, which has the primary responsibility of maintaining peace and security, is

therefore the natural spokesperson for the international community.

Since May, we have worked tirelessly to ensure that the Council can send a clear and united message to the Syrian authorities. After the massacre in Hama, the Council adopted, on 3 August, a presidential statement (S/PRST/2011/16) condemning the Syrian authorities and calling for an immediate end to all violence. On that basis, we prepared a draft resolution. Every effort has been made to understand the concerns of some members of the Council and to prepare a unanimous response. Each of us knows that we agreed to modify our text on many occasions. In particular, we agreed to withdraw the proposed sanctions, which we thought were necessary. Each of us knows that we made numerous concessions. The text that we submitted today is, in many ways, very similar to the presidential statement that we adopted on 3 August. It was to have updated that statement in the light of recent events.

Thus, we cannot doubt the meaning of the veto against this text today. This is not a matter of language, it is a political choice. It is a veto on principle, which means that it is a refusal of all Council resolutions against Syria. It shows disdain for the legitimate aspirations that have been so bravely expressed in Syria for the past five months. It is a rejection of this tremendous movement for freedom and democracy that is the Arab Spring.

Let there be no mistake. This veto will not stop us. No veto can give carte blanche to the Syrian authorities, who have lost all legitimacy by murdering their own people. The appeals of the Arab League to put an end to this blood-letting, the statements from neighbouring countries and the suffering of the Syrian people clearly show that this veto runs counter to the path of the historic events occurring in Syria and throughout the region.

In the Security Council and within the European Union, France, along with all its partners, will not cease its efforts to ensure that the rights of the Syrian people are recognized and respected, so that those responsible for the violence can one day be brought to justice — and they will — and to promote an inclusive, credible political process that can fulfil the aspirations that are being expressed daily in Syria.

In conclusion, I should like to pay tribute to the courage of all those women and men who continue, after months of bloody repression, to call for freedom in Syria. Only an effective response to those aspirations can restore stability to that country, on which depends the stability of a fragile region. The international community and the Council in particular, given its mandate, cannot escape its obligation to ensure that this happens, and we regret that that was not the case tonight.

**Mr. Churkin** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Madam, I wish you success in your work as President of the Security Council for this month. We would also like to thank Ambassador Salam and the entire Lebanese delegation for their outstanding work in September, which was not easy.

It is clear that the result of today's vote reflects not so much a question of acceptability of wording as a conflict of political approaches. That is the only part of what was said by my French colleague with which I agree. From the outset, the Russian delegation undertook intensive, constructive efforts to develop an effective response on the part of the Council to the dramatic events in Syria. The first such response was reflected in a consensual statement issued by the President on 3 August (S/PRST/2011/16). Based on that approach, together with our Chinese partners we prepared a draft resolution to which, as events developed, we made some changes, bearing in mind the concerns of our colleagues on the Council. We would like to thank our partners, especially Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa — the BRICS States — for supporting our text.

Of vital importance is the fact that at the heart of the Russian and Chinese draft was the logic of respect for the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria as well as the principle of non-intervention, including military, in its affairs; the principle of the unity of the Syrian people; refraining from confrontation; and inviting all to an even-handed and comprehensive dialogue aimed at achieving civil peace and national agreement by reforming the socio-economic and political life of the country.

Today's rejected draft was based on a very different philosophy — the philosophy of confrontation. We cannot agree with this unilateral, accusatory bent against Damascus. We deem unacceptable the threat of an ultimatum and sanctions against the Syrian authorities. Such an approach contravenes the principle of a peaceful settlement of the crisis on the basis of a full Syrian national

dialogue. Our proposals for wording on the non-acceptability of foreign military intervention were not taken into account, and, based on the well-known events in North Africa, that can only put us on our guard. Equally alarming is the weak wording in connection with the opposition and the lack of an appeal to them to distance themselves from extremists. Given the basis of statements by some Western politicians on President Al-Assad's loss of legitimacy, such an approach could trigger a full-fledged conflict in Syria and destabilization in the region as a whole. The collapse of Syria as a result of a civil war would have a very destructive impact on the situation in the entire Middle East.

The situation in Syria cannot be considered in the Council separately from the Libyan experience. The international community is alarmed by statements that compliance with Security Council resolutions on Libya in the NATO interpretation is a model for the future actions of NATO in implementing the responsibility to protect. It is easy to see that today's "Unified Protector" model could happen in Syria. All present should understand that the Russian position regarding the conflict in Libya is in no way based on any kind of special ties with the Al-Qadhafi regime, especially since a number of States represented at this table had warmer relations with the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

The people of Libya have spoken regarding Al-Qadhafi, and they have determined his fate. For us, Members of the United Nations, including in terms of a precedent, it is very important to know how the resolution was implemented and how a Security Council resolution turned into its opposite.

The demand for a quick ceasefire turned into a full-fledged civil war, the humanitarian, social, economic and military consequences of which transcend Libyan borders. The situation in connection with the no-fly zone has morphed into the bombing of oil refineries, television stations and other civilian sites. The arms embargo has morphed into a naval blockade in western Libya, including a blockade of humanitarian goods. Today the tragedy of Benghazi has spread to other western Libyan towns — Sirte and Bani Walid. These types of models should be excluded from global practices once and for all.

With respect to Syria, we are not advocates of the Al-Assad regime. We believe that the violence is unacceptable, and we condemn the repression of protests by peaceful demonstrators. However, the continuation of this tragedy cannot be blamed only on the harsh actions of the authorities. Recent events convincingly show that the radical opposition no longer hides its extremist bent and is relying on terrorist tactics, hoping for foreign sponsors and acting outside of the law. Armed groups supported by smuggling and other illegal activities are providing supplies, taking over land, and killing and perpetrating atrocities against people who comply with the law-enforcement authorities.

In universities and schools, representatives of the Syrian intelligentsia and civil service have recently been casualties of the terrorists. We convey our condolences to Mufti Ahmad Hassoon, who is well known in the East for his active efforts to lay the foundations for tolerance and international dialogue, in connection with the death of his 22-year-old son in a terrorist attack on Sunday.

We must bear in mind the fact that a significant number of Syrians do not agree with the demand for a quick regime change and would rather see gradual changes, believing that they have to be implemented while maintaining civil peace and harmony in the country. Such changes, even if they are late in coming, are still beginning to be implemented, and we must not overlook this. The best way to end the crisis is to refuse to provoke a confrontation and to bring together all responsible members of the international community so as to induce the parties to launch an inclusive intra-Syrian political process. This is the path taken in Yemen, where intensive mediation efforts are under way aimed at bringing together the belligerent parties.

Russia is continuing to work with Damascus. We call on the Syrian leadership to more speedily implement the changes. They need to free those who have been detained during the unrest and who have committed no criminal acts. A more active dialogue must be undertaken with the opposition and access must be given to the international media, as well as step up their interaction with the League of Arab States. Judging by what the Arab League has done and what is being shown on television, our efforts are bearing fruit. We are continuing to work with constructive patriotic groups of the Syrian opposition who are concerned about the fate of their country and who have said that they want no foreign interference in their internal affairs.

We believe that today's message will be correctly understood by the opposition forces. There is no alternative to dialogue; there cannot be. If the opposition believes that Mr. Al-Assad's laws are imperfect, then it must take up the invitation of the Government to discuss them. We will indicate our concerns to the leaders of the Syrian opposition when they visit Moscow in the near future. Changes for a peaceful resolution are possible, and we will be supporting those prospects in coordination with all constructively inclined peace partners.

If Council colleagues agree with our approach, which is aimed at dialogue and full national reconciliation in Syria, we will continue to work on the Russian-Chinese draft so as to arrive at a balanced resolution containing the vital elements for a settlement. Our draft remains on the table.

On that basis, we are prepared to develop a genuinely collective and constructive position for the international community and not get involved with legitimizing previously adopted unilateral sanctions or attempts at violent regime change. The people of Syria deserve peaceful change, with the support of the international community.

**Mr. Li Baodong** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China is highly concerned about the developments in Syria. We call on the various parties in Syria to exercise restraint and to avoid more bloodshed all forms of violence. We hope that the Syrian Government will implement commitments to reform. We also hope that a Syrian-led and inclusive political process will be launched as soon as possible, so as to facilitate the early easing of tension there.

The international community should provide constructive assistance to facilitate the achievement of the objectives I have mentioned. In the meantime, it should fully respect Syria's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. Whether the Security Council takes further action on the question of Syria should depend upon whether it would facilitate the easing of tension in Syria, help to defuse differences through political dialogue and contribute to the maintenance of peace and stability in the Middle East. Most important, is should depend upon whether it complies with the Charter of the United Nations and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States — which has a bearing upon the security and survival of developing countries, in particular small and medium-sized countries, as well as on world peace and stability.

The Chinese Government's position on those questions has been consistent and firm. On that basis, China has always participated positively and constructively in the consultations on the relevant draft resolutions. At the moment, the Security Council has before it two draft resolutions. One, which China supports, advocates respect for the sovereignty of Syria and resolving the crisis there through political dialogue. With regard to the other draft resolution, which the Council considered today, like quite a few other Council members, China believes that, under the current circumstances, sanctions or the threat thereof does not help to resolve the question of Syria and, instead, may further complicate the situation. Regrettably and disappointingly, this major and legitimate concern did not receive due attention from the sponsors. As it now stands, the draft resolution focuses solely on exerting pressure on Syria, even threatening to impose sanctions. It does not help to facilitate the easing of the situation in Syria. China therefore voted against it.

Syria is an important country in the Middle East. The maintenance of peace and stability in Syria serves the common interests of the Syrian people and the international community. Along with the international community, China is willing to play a positive and constructive role in appropriately resolving the question of Syria. We will continue to support the mediation efforts of the relevant countries and organizations in the region.

**Mr. Moraes Cabral** (Portugal): Allow me, first of all, to congratulate you, Madame President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council, as well as to wish you every success. I also wish to thank Ambassador Nawaf Salam and his team for the very efficient and wise way in which they conducted the Council's work during the month of September, often in very challenging conditions.

We deeply regret that the Security Council was unable to unanimously and unequivocally condemn, and demand an immediate end to, the Syrian Government's violent repression against its population, even though the situation in the country has continued to deteriorate since the adoption of the presidential statement of the Council on 3 August (S/PRST/2011/16).

As underlined all throughout this process, the key concern and objective of the draft resolution was to prevent further bloodshed and ensure a peaceful solution to the crisis in Syria. As such, and in an attempt to ensure a unified voice from the Council on a situation of such troubling proportions, the members of the European Union engaged openly and constructively with all members of the Council to ensure the adoption of a meaningful resolution with a view to sparing Syrians further suffering. We are therefore deeply disappointed with the outcome of today's voting.

The situation in Syria is of the utmost concern. The Syrian Government's violent repression against its population and the ongoing violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms must cease immediately. We regret the huge loss of life and strongly condemn the widespread human rights violations. Those responsible for human rights violations must be held accountable. We urge the Syrian authorities to cooperate fully with the commission of inquiry mandated by the Human Rights Council and to allow it expeditious and unhindered access.

We equally regret that the Syrian Government has repeatedly failed to heed the many calls urging an end to the violence and the undertaking of genuine, credible and inclusive political process. By persistently ignoring the appeals of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, members of the Council and the Human Rights Council, the League of Arab States and its own neighbours, the Syrian authorities have allowed the situation to escalate and undermine the security and stability of the country and that of an already fragile region.

As it has stated many times before, Portugal remains fully committed to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Syria. We therefore once again call for an inclusive and credible Syrian-led political process aimed at effectively addressing the legitimate aspirations and concerns of Syria's population. Dialogue is the one and only way to ensure a peaceful outcome to the crisis in Syria. Violence and repression can never be the answer.

**Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri** (India): I want to start by congratulating you, Madame President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October. We have no doubt that you will have an extremely successful presidency. I would also like to take this opportunity to complement Lebanon, and in particular Ambassador Nawaf Salam, for the very wise and able stewardship that he provided to the Council during September, a difficult month at the best of times.

Both historically and in contemporary times, Syria has been an important country in the Middle East. Its role in the Middle East peace process and in the stability of the wider region cannot be overemphasized. Prolonged instability and unrest in Syria therefore clearly have ramifications for the region and beyond.

India remains concerned about the unfolding events in Syria that have resulted in the deaths of hundreds of civilians and security force personnel. We deplore all violence, irrespective of who its perpetrators are.

We recognize the responsibility of all States to respect the fundamental rights of their people, address their legitimate aspirations and respond to their grievances through administrative, political, economic and other measures. At the same time, States also have the obligation to protect their citizens from armed groups and militants. While the right of people to protest peacefully is to be respected, States cannot but take appropriate action when militant groups — heavily armed — resort to violence against State authority and infrastructure.

Given the complexity of ground realities in Syria, we believe that engaging Syria in a collaborative and constructive dialogue and partnership is the only pragmatic and productive way forward. In our bilateral contacts with the Syrian Government, as well as through the India-Brazil-South Africa initiative, we have urged them to exercise restraint, abjure violence and pay heed to the aspirations of their people.

The international community should give time and space for the Syrian Government to implement the far-reaching reform measures they have announced. For this, it is also necessary that the opposition forces in Syria give up the path of armed insurrection and engage constructively with the authorities. We firmly believe that the actions of the international community should facilitate engagement of the Syrian Government and the opposition in a Syrian-led inclusive political process, and not complicate the situation by threats of sanctions, regime change, et cetera.

The resolution under the Council's consideration does not accommodate our concern about the threat of sanctions. It does not condemn the violence perpetrated by the Syrian opposition, nor does it place any responsibility on the opposition to abjure violence and engage with the Syrian authorities for redressing of their grievances through a peaceful political process. We have, therefore, abstained in the vote on the resolution.

**Sir Mark Lyall Grant** (United Kingdom): May I take this opportunity to congratulate you, Madame President, on taking over the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October and to wish you well in that task. I also wish to thank Ambassador Nawaf Salam and his team from Lebanon, who ably stewarded the Council in September.

The United Kingdom is deeply disappointed by the decision of some Council members to block the adoption of the draft resolution submitted today by the European members of the Council. Two months ago, this Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2011/16) condemning the widespread violations of human rights and the use of force against civilians by the Syrian authorities. It called for an immediate end to violence, compliance with obligations under international law and for the Syrian Government to implement its stated commitments to reform.

Since the presidential statement, the situation has deteriorated further. The regime continues to brutally repress its people. It has killed almost three thousand civilians. It has used disproportionate force and has arbitrarily detained many thousands of people. Its actions may amount to crimes against humanity. There is no sign of reform or of a genuine attempt to address the concerns of the Syrian population. How can there be genuine dialogue when the regime is denying its people freedom of assembly and freedom of speech?

The failure of the Syrian regime to heed calls of the international community, both bilateral and collective, has been met with increasing concern by Syria's neighbours and the wider region. Two weeks ago, the United Nations Secretary-General said that enough is enough, and called for the international community to take coherent measures.

Against this backdrop, the time for strong Security Council action was long overdue. We, and indeed the majority of members of the Council, believed that the time had come for the imposition of sanctions. But a minority — two with the power of veto — said they would oppose sanctions.

In an attempt to maintain the unity of this Council, for the past few weeks we have therefore been engaged in intensive negotiations aimed at ensuring that the Council could at least send a strong signal to the Syrian regime to stop the violence. Through these negotiations we tried to meet the stated concerns of Council members. We removed the sanctions. Still, it was unacceptable to the minority. We called on all sides to reject violence and extremism. Still it was unacceptable. We removed any sense that sanctions would automatically follow in 30 days if the regime failed to comply, and still it was unacceptable. By including reference to Article 41 of the United Nations Charter we made it clear that any further steps would be non-military in nature. Still it was unacceptable.

The text we voted on today contained nothing that any member of this Council should have felt the need to oppose. Yet two members chose to veto. It will be a deep disappointment to the people of Syria and to the wider region that some members of this Council could not show their support for their struggle for basic human rights that most populations of the countries around this table enjoy.

Some members of the Security Council have made bilateral attempts to engage President Assad and to persuade the Syrian Government to change course and implement reform. Each time, they have received vague promises of reform, and each time the Syrian Government has failed to deliver. By blocking this resolution, the onus is now on those countries to step up their efforts to persuade the Syrian Government to end the violence and pursue genuine reform.

If the situation continues as it is, this Council will have to shoulder its responsibilities and take the tough action that it has, unfortunately, been prevented from taking today.

**Mr. Osorio** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to join my colleagues in hailing you, Madame President, and commending you on taking on the presidency of the Security Council. I wish you the greatest of success. You will have our full support. I would also like to thank the President last month, the Ambassador of Lebanon, and his entire team for the extraordinary guidance of our work.

My delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution proposed by Germany, France, Portugal and the United Kingdom. We are convinced that it is the ideal and necessary means for urging the Syrian authorities to immediately cease their violent offensive against the civilian population so that an independent inquiry can be launched into all human rights violations committed during the protests and calling for punishment of those responsible for violence in all its forms.

The primary responsibility of the Government of Syria is to protect its population. It has not done so — much to the contrary. We are aware that the solution to the crisis in that country will come through a political process that effectively bears in mind the legitimate aspirations of the people. However, it is first and foremost necessary that their fundamental freedoms and human rights be respected.

We regret that the Security Council did not adopt this text and that the veto was used to reject it. After several months of negotiations the non-imposition of sanctions was attempted; that was a concession. Also, the Syrian authorities were urged to move ahead with the reforms, which have still not been implemented.

**Ms. Rice** (United States of America): Before I begin my statement, let me congratulate you, Madame President, on assuming the presidency of the Council for the month of October. We know you will lead us ably, and we very much look forward to cooperating with you. Let me join others in paying tribute to Lebanon and Ambassador Nawaf Salam for his stellar leadership of the Council through a very difficult month. We are grateful to him.

The United States is outraged that this Council has utterly failed to address an urgent moral challenge and a growing threat to regional peace and security. Several members have sought for weeks to weaken and strip bare any texts that would have defended the lives of innocent civilians from Assad's brutality. Today, two members have vetoed a vastly watered-down text that does not even mention sanctions.

Let me be clear. The United States believes it is past time for this Council to assume its responsibilities and impose tough, targeted sanctions and an arms embargo on the Assad regime, as we have done domestically. Yet today, the courageous people of Syria can now see clearly who on this Council supports their yearning for liberty and universal human rights, and who does not.

During this season of change, the people of the Middle East can now see clearly which nations have chosen to ignore their calls for democracy and instead prop up desperate, cruel dictators. Those who oppose this draft resolution and give cover to a brutal regime will have to answer to the Syrian people and, indeed, to people across the region who are pursuing the same universal aspirations.

The record is clear. For more than six months, the Al-Assad regime has deliberately unleashed violence, torture and persecution against peaceful protesters, human rights defenders and their families. The High Commissioner for Human Rights has already warned that the Syrian Government's appalling actions might amount to crimes against humanity. The Al-Assad regime's critics have joined the chorus of condemnation from the region, including the Gulf Cooperation Council, which demanded an immediate end to what it called Assad's "killing machine". But the Security Council has not yet passed even a hortatory resolution to counter the Al-Assad regime's brutal oppression.

The arguments against strong Council action grow weaker and weaker by the day. Some on the Council argue that the Al-Assad regime's abuses are not that egregious or that the regime deserves more time for its so-called reforms. But as reporting by the United Nations itself makes clear, the Syrian Government's efforts to mask its continued atrocities are as transparent as its promises of reform are empty.

Others claim that strong Security Council action on Syria would merely be a pretext for military intervention. Let there be no doubt: this is not about military intervention; this is not about Libya. That is a cheap ruse by those who would rather sell arms to the Syrian regime than stand with the Syrian people.

This is about whether the Council, during a time of sweeping change in the Middle East, will stand with peaceful protesters crying out for freedom or with a regime of thugs with guns that tramples human dignity and human rights. As matters now stand, the Council will not even mandate the dispatch of human rights monitors to Syria, a grave failure that may doom the prospects for peaceful protest in the face of a regime that knows no limits.

In August, we clearly condemned the violence and made clear that the Syrian regime's repression is utterly unacceptable. Several of us on the Council and many throughout the international community have voiced our condemnation and imposed sanctions on the Al-Assad regime. Regional organizations such as the League of Arab States, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation have urged the Syrian Government to stop the bloodshed. But the Syrian Government's reply has been an increase in the violence and repression, while some Council members have chosen to look the other way.

We urge the Governments that failed to support Council action to change course and heed the voices of the Syrian people. The Al-Assad regime flatly refuses to meet its international obligations, including those laid out in the Council's 3 August presidential statement (S/PRST/2011/16). The international community must bring real consequences to bear.

In failing to adopt the draft resolution before us, the Council has squandered an opportunity to shoulder its responsibilities to the Syrian people. We deeply regret that some members of the Council have prevented us from taking a principled stand against the Syrian regime's brutal oppression of its people. But the suffering citizens of Syria are watching today, and so is the entire Middle East. The crisis in Syria will stay before the Security Council, and we will not rest until the Council rises to meet its responsibilities.

**Mr. Salam** (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): First of all, I would like to congratulate Nigeria, Madame President, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October. I also wish to thank the President and all my colleagues for their kind words about our work during our presidency of the Council last month.

Permit me once again to say that, given the events unfolding in Syria, Lebanon would like to defend that brotherly Arab country and its right to sovereignty and the integrity of its people and land, including the right to ensure the security and safety of all its citizens. We would also like once again to express our great sorrow at the death of all victims in sisterly Syria. Thus, in conformity with the position it took on 3 August regarding the presidential statement (S/PRST/2011/16), and in protection of Syria's unity and stability, Lebanon today abstained from voting on the draft resolution before us.

**Mr. Barbalić** (Bosnia and Herzegovina): At the outset, allow me to congratulate the Nigerian delegation for assuming the presidency, as well as to congratulate Ambassador Salam and his delegation for their excellent leadership in September.

I would like now to voice our deep concern over the situation in Syria. Instead of witnessing a peaceful democratization and reform process, we are seeing further deterioration of the situation. Day in and day out, the Syrians continue to count increasing numbers of casualties. We would like to express our deepest sympathies to the families and friends of those who have lost their lives since the outbreak of the crisis in the country.

While expressing our full support for Syrian sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, we call upon the country's authorities to immediately start seeking ways to meet the legitimate aspirations and demands of their people through an inclusive and meaningful Syrian-led dialogue. We believe that the effective implementation of announced reforms can truly contribute to ending the unrest and restoring peace and order in Syria.

We furthermore strongly condemn the continuing violence and use of force, which is unacceptable under international humanitarian and human rights law. We call on the Syrian authorities to immediately stop such actions. Human lives must be respected and protected. We also reiterate our firm position that all those responsible for committing crimes must be brought to justice and held accountable for their actions.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is particularly worried about information regarding the flow of refugees fleeing the violence. We therefore underline the importance of unimpeded access of the United Nations and other international humanitarian organizations to the affected population.

We strongly believe that the proposed draft resolution addressed a number of critical issues. Moreover, we still consider that only prompt and decisive measures can bring about stabilization and avoid further escalation of the crisis in Syria. Had it been adopted, the proposed draft resolution could have benefited the Syrian people and contributed to peace and security in the region. Syria is an important regional stakeholder, and its stability is crucial for the peace process in the Middle East.

**Mr. Wittig** (Germany): Let me start by warmly thanking Ambassador Nawaf Salam and his team for his wise, effective and courageous leadership of the Council in the month of September. Let me also join others in congratulating you, Madame President, as you assume the presidency of the Council for this month; you can count on Germany's support.

Since the beginning of this year, we have witnessed tremendous change in the Arab world. We see how peaceful demonstrators express their desire for freedom, dignity and self-determination. We are impressed by the courage of the people and their readiness for sacrifice, in spite of oppression and authoritarian rule. Throughout the region, we commend all those who continue to express their legitimate aspiration in a peaceful manner. We are appalled by those who so brutally repress their own people.

The Syrian security forces — military and militias — have violently and indiscriminately crushed demonstrations that were overwhelmingly peaceful. Syrians from all segments of society were demanding their basic rights. Their aspirations were met with tanks, bullets and mass arrests, as well as murder, forced disappearance, torture, deprivation of liberty and persecution.

We mourn the victims and have profound respect for the hundreds of thousands of Syrians who have put their lives at risk to achieve a better future for themselves and their children. Thousands are still under arrest, in many cases without contact with their families. We urge the Syrian authorities to release all political prisoners and detained political demonstrators immediately.

For months now the international community has called on the Syrian authorities to end all violence, fully respect human rights and comply with their obligations under international law. The Security Council, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Arab League, the European Union and many, many individual States and Governments — not a single one of those appeals has been heeded by the Syrian regime. On the contrary, the violent repression continued unabated.

Today the Council finally had a chance to decide that the actions of the Syrian leadership will not go unanswered. We sincerely regret that members of the Council could not find a common voice to appropriately address the grave and systematic human rights violations by the Syrian authorities.

The stakes are high. If the repression by the Syrian regime does not stop, the country will move closer to the brink of civil war. The stability of the region is at risk. International peace and security are threatened. This is not the time or place for a mere wait-and-see approach; it is for actively engaging in pursuit of greater stability.

Today the Council failed to live up to its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations: the maintenance of international peace and security. But let me be very clear. My country would have wished for a stronger resolution at a much earlier stage. For the sake of a unified signal from the Council, the European sponsors of this draft resolution (S/2011/612) have been working eagerly towards a compromise among Council members in recent weeks. We made substantial concessions in order to gain the support of the Council. We are deeply disappointed that some members did not find themselves in a position to reach a compromise, two of them using their veto power.

This should not, however, spoil the message already sent out by a large segment of the international community: we do not want to stand idly by while atrocities are being committed. The aspirations of the Syrian people cannot be answered by tanks, bullets and torture. Not only will members of the regime be held accountable for their deeds; they also have to understand that the only viable option for the future of Syria is through a meaningful, Syrian-led political process.

While we encourage political dialogue, we will continue, if need be, to push for sanctions against those who brutally repress their people and threaten international peace and stability. We will do so within the framework of the United Nations and the European Union, and bilaterally. The people in Syria and the Arab world should know that Germany, its partners and all those who cherish the values of freedom, dignity and self-determination will not relent in their efforts to stand by them.

**Mr. Sangqu** (South Africa): Let me begin, Madame President, by joining my colleagues in congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council this month. We wish you

every success. I also wish to thank Ambassador Salam of Lebanon for his stewardship of the Council in the busy month of September.

South Africa is deeply concerned about the deteriorating political and humanitarian situation in Syria. It is our hope that the situation will be resolved in a peaceful manner and in accordance with the will of the Syrian people. We condemn the loss of life in Syria and call for maximum restraint on the part of all parties to the conflict. We demand an immediate end to all violence in Syria.

On the humanitarian front, we call on the Syrian authorities to facilitate access for humanitarian agencies, including the United Nations, in accordance with the relevant international human rights and humanitarian law.

We urge the Syrian authorities to initiate an open, transparent and all-inclusive political process with their people to address their grievances, in order to guarantee their fundamental political rights and freedoms, including their right to freedom of assembly and freedom of speech. We also encourage the opposition to participate in this political process with a view to ensuring peace and stability in Syria.

A holistic political solution must be found, one that will respect democracy, political reform, justice and human rights, as well as the socio-economic development needs of the people of Syria, in order to ensure long-term peace and stability. This solution must also preserve the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria.

Syria is integral to a wider resolution of the Middle East conflict. Its stability is linked to that of its neighbours. Any action on the part of the international community on Syria, therefore, including action by the Security Council, should be cognizant of the regional implications. We have seen recently that Security Council resolutions have been abused, and that their implementation has gone far beyond the mandate of what was intended.

With the regard to the draft resolution (S/2011/612) before us, South Africa was concerned about the sponsors' intention to impose punitive measures that would have pre-judged the resolution's implementation. We believe that these were designed as a prelude to further actions. We are concerned that this draft resolution not be part of a hidden agenda aimed at once again instituting regime change, which has been an objective clearly stated by some. We are thus concerned about the fact that the sponsors of this draft resolution rejected language that clearly excluded the possibility of military intervention in the resolution of the Syrian crisis. We maintain that the Security Council should proceed with caution on Syria lest we exacerbate an already volatile situation.

It is for these reasons that my delegation abstained on the draft resolution before us.

**Mrs. Viotti** (Brazil): I wish to congratulate you, Madame President, on assuming the presidency of the Council, and to pledge our full support to you. I would also like to express our appreciation to Ambassador Nawaf Salam of Lebanon and his team for their excellent conduct of our work in September.

Brazil stands in solidarity with the aspirations expressed by the populations of many Arab countries for greater political participation, economic opportunities, freedom and dignity. We have consistently called on the countries concerned to address such aspirations through dialogue and meaningful reforms, and to refrain from the use of force against peaceful demonstrators. Brazil has unequivocally condemned human rights violations wherever they occur.

The situation in Syria is of great concern to us. Brazil has voiced this concern publicly and in our conversations with the Syrian authorities, individually and alongside our India-Brazil-South-Africa (IBSA) partners. We have called for violence to cease and humanitarian access to be granted.

Brazil has supported the establishment by the Human Rights Council of a commission of inquiry, which will be chaired by a Brazilian national. We hope that the Syrian authorities will cooperate with the commission. We take note of the initiatives announced by the Syrian Government, including measures aimed at reforming the political system and the release of political prisoners. Such initiatives, however, cannot attain their goal if violence continues.

We appreciate the efforts made by the sponsors of this draft resolution (S/2011/612) to take different views into account, but we would have wished that further efforts had been made to muster broader support before it was put to the vote. Because of Syria's centrality to stability in the region, it is all the

more important that the Council be able to act with caution, and preferably with a single voice. We are convinced that more time would have allowed for differences to be bridged and for legitimate concerns to be accommodated. We regret that this was not the case.

Brazil firmly believes that meaningful and inclusive national dialogue, leading to effective political reform, is the only way out of the current crisis in Syria. We encourage the League of Arab States to continue to play a constructive role through its diplomatic efforts. Both collectively and individually, Brazil will continue to advocate for a political engagement that can effectively bear fruit and pave the way for a peaceful solution to the crisis in Syria.

**The President**: I will now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

**Mr. Ja'afari** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset I wish to congratulate you, Madam, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. We also extend our congratulations and appreciation to our fellow Ambassador of Lebanon for his able and successful conduct of the Council's tasks during the past month.

The unprecedented, aggressive language used by certain ambassadors against my country and against its political leadership has facilitated my task today, for their discourse underscored what we and other friendly ambassadors have said, namely, that my country is being targeted by its enemies on the basis of principle, and not on any humanitarian reasons whatsoever. That aggressive discourse has revealed the prejudice against my country, Syria, and against its political leadership that exists in certain Western capitals. The prejudice is due to our independent political position, which does not conform to the agendas of those capitals.

On 3 October, an armed terrorist group assassinated both Saria Hassoun, the son of Grand Mufti Ahmad Badreddin Hassoun, and Dr. Mohammad al-Omar, a history professor at the University of Aleppo. A few days ago, on 29 September, to be exact, another armed terrorist group assassinated Aws Abdel Karim Khalil, a nuclear engineer and dean of the University of Homs. Two days earlier, on 27 September, a third armed terrorist group assassinated Nael al-Dakhil, dean of the Chemistry Faculty at the University of Homs, as well as Dr. Mohammad Ali Akeel, dean of the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Homs. On 25 September, a fourth armed terrorist group assassinated Dr. Hassan Eid, Director of Cardiology at the National Hospital in Homs.

All of those crimes were committed in the same week. Unfortunately, they were added to the 800 army, police and security personnel and a similar number of our civilian citizens who were killed. We are deeply saddened by that.

The armed terrorist groups inaugurated a new era of terrorism, targeting Syria's State institutions, the army and universities, by assassinating our scientific, medical, academic and spiritual leaders. Despite the terrible haemorrhaging of the entire homeland of my country, Syria, of which I am proud, there are certain States that are leading the international campaign to intervene in Syria under the pretext of human rights and the protection of civilians. Those countries continue to reject the existence of the armed terrorist groups in Syria, for reasons that are known to all.

Moreover, those States continue to protect and sponsor the leaders of those terrorist groups, whom they host in their capitals. They continue to convene for them one conference after another, where they refuse to engage in dialogue with my Government. Notably, those States are infamous for their black notebook in the field of protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms.

I do not think anyone would chose to ignore the massacres and human rights violations that were committed in Viet Nam, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Cambodia, Algeria and many other African countries and in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as in Libya, and in the prisons of Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo and the secret prisons in Europe, to mention just a few.

We have stated previously that Syria is beleaguered by a two-pronged problem. The first prong is that the country truly requires economic, political and social reforms. Such reforms are necessary and the masses have called for them. That is what we are working to achieve. The second prong is the misuse of the demands and needs of the masses for purposes that are diametrically opposed to the desires of the Syrian people. This includes misuse of those rightful demands as a ladder to facilitate external opposition, provoke sectarian unrest and insecurity, pave the way for external intervention and to call for that intervention.

All of those actions are categorically rejected by the Syrian people, including by the honest domestic opposition. In that connection, certain parties within the Security Council continue to promote the Council's involvement in Syria's domestic affairs and development, which is a tremendous disservice to the rule of law. It is also in the interest of the agendas of certain parties who oppose Syria on the basis of unfounded pretexts, including the pretext of maintaining international peace and security. That is not in the interest of Syria's security and stability. We are astounded by that irrational non-objective political trend that strives, in an absurd and frantic manner, to undermine stability, security and coexistence in the entire region generally, and in Syria in particular, by defaming Syria and its important political stature and role in the Arab region and the world.

Those parties have repeatedly abused the Council, using it as a cover-up for implementing their interventions in the domestic affairs of Member States. And even when those parties were faced with the desire of the other States on the Council to rise above those interventionist policies, we noted that the former resorted to unilateral actions outside the scope of international law to implement their political and military schemes. Hence, those parties — in violation of international law — exported NATO forces to many Member States of this international Organization, to undermine their political stability, plunder their riches and spread so-called creative anarchy in those countries.

However — and this is a paradox — those parties made aggressive use of the veto 50 times since 1948 against the Palestinians, in order to deprive them of their legitimate rights and to prevent the establishment of their State. A certain State used its veto power 50 times to protect Israel and it continues to threaten to use its veto power. That could be considered taking part in genocide, because that action is tantamount to turning a blind eye to and supporting the Israeli massacres in occupied Arab lands. That is without even mentioning the misuse of the events and developments in Syria to divert international public opinion away from the legitimate demands of Palestinians to have full membership in the United Nations.

The Syrian leadership responded quickly and immediately to the legitimate demands of the Syrian population. President Bashar Al-Assad announced a comprehensive package of reforms, which our Government is implementing by enacting a wide spectrum of rules and legislation enhancing the democratic process and expanding the participation of our citizens in political and economic processes, in complete independence of the external evaluations and positions that have no place in our domestic affairs. Reforms in Syria have become tangible realities on the ground that can not be ignored. They are ongoing, despite the attempts by people outside our country to curtail those reforms by various means.

No State can claim that it is more desirous to guarantee the safety and security of its citizens than Syria. Since the unfortunate and painful events in our country, we have strived to guarantee the security and safety of each citizen. We have also endeavoured to continue to provide basic services, food and medicine without delay, despite the hasty imposition of economic sanctions, imposed unilaterally and illegally, outside of international consensus, against my country. As we strive to stand against the forces of Israeli and Western hegemony directed against our country, those measures were intended to put pressure on the Syrian population and their livelihoods and to push it to replace its political regime. Such activities are a violation of a people's right to self-determination and to choose its political system without outside pressure. That is why claiming a motive in the so-called humanitarian situation is only a pretext to intervene in our domestic affairs in a way that is harmful to our leaders and our country, in the interest of external political agendas that have nothing to do with the desire to promote humanitarian goals in Syria.

Syria received delegations from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the International Committee of the Red Cross, presided over by the Chairman of the Committee, who met personally with our President, Bashar Al-Assad. They and other international political, religious and media delegations saw for themselves the provocation, incitement and propaganda from certain circles aimed at distorting the facts.

Certain Council members have tried of late to intervene in our domestic affairs under the pretext of the protection of civilians. We only wonder here where they have been and why they have not protected civilians in Palestine, the occupied Syrian Golan, Southern Lebanon, Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya, when the citizens of those countries were beleaguered by crimes against humanity and war crimes. It is

interesting that the representative of France, on 14 July of this year, extended thanks to Israel for its military action against Syria in 2007. Could that not be considered an encouragement and promotion of aggression? Is that not against all rules and norms of the international community and all ethical principles that reject the use of force as a solution?

The international legal framework governing international relations is based on the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of States. It has been enshrined in myriad international instruments, chief among them the United Nations Charter, Article 2, paragraph 7. Therefore, the calls from certain circles to topple the legitimate Government of Syria are an irresponsible incitement aimed at undermining Syrian stability. It is a glaring violation of the Charter of the United Nations and is harmful to the interests of Governments. Encouraging the radical demands of the opposition in Syria to topple the Government by force of arms, violence and terrorism amounts to a coup supported by outside Powers and can certainly not be considered as reform.

Is not the political declaration by certain leaders and foreign ministers of countries on the Council that the Syrian President has lost his legitimacy, and that therefore he should step down, a blatant breach of international law and the Charter of the United Nations? Is that not a blatant interference in the internal affairs of Syria and is it not subject to questioning? Is that not tantamount to hindrance of national reforms by inciting the Syrian people on the streets against the legitimate Syrian leadership? Those are questions that we leave to members to answer.

We hope that the United Nations and its Member States will assist Syria in addressing the terrorist and extremist acts and attempts to destabilize it. Hastily defined positions should not be used to disguise political pressure in order to encourage armed extremist groups. Here, we wish to affirm that the intervention of the Security Council in Syrian internal affairs further aggravates the situation and sends a message to extremists and terrorists that their acts of deliberate sabotage and violence — towards which no country can be lenient — are encouraged and supported by the Security Council.

Syria, like other States Members of the Organization, including those represented on the Council, have problems that require reform. If there is anyone here who has no problems and does not need reform, they can cast a stone at us. While the greedy schemes of our enemies inside and outside the Council may succeed elsewhere at the expense of the stability, security and safety of other countries, I can underscore that Syria will stand resolute against any plot that targets its sovereignty, national security, independence and stability, as well as its independent political decisions.

We therefore reject the manoeuvres of the sponsors of the draft resolution that has just failed to be adopted. Such political and media manoeuvres target my country and its stature in the international arena. The power of prestige is more important than power itself. The sponsors have lost the power of prestige, and now they have resorted to power, since they have lost the trust of the majority of States Members of the Organization.

Through such conduct, they undermine international legitimacy and seek to lead the entire world into a new colonial era and military adventures in various places that are bound and doomed to fail. Those very States led the whole world into two world wars that claimed millions of lives on our planet. With their colonial behaviour, their enslavement and their attitude, they caused the untold suffering of hundreds of millions in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

In closing, I wish to extend thanks, gratitude and appreciation to the friendly States that rejected the misuse and abuse of the Council as a tool to harm my country's interests, political independence, security and stability. If we are optimistic about the Council, it is because we continue to hear the voice of the wise echoing in the Chamber, calling for a hand to be extended to Syria to address its difficulties, to encourage the Syrian Government to push ahead with the desired reforms, and to call on the external opposition to enter into a comprehensive national dialogue in order to build a Syria for all our citizens without exception.

**The President**: There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

*The meeting rose at 7.45 p.m.*

United Nations S/PV.6628

# Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

*Provisional*

**6628**th meeting

Thursday, 6 October 2011, 10 a.m.

New York

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *President*: | Mrs. Ogwu | (Nigeria) |
| *Members*: | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Mr. Barbalić |
| | Brazil | Mrs. Viotti |
| | China | Mr. Wang Min |
| | Colombia | Mr. Alzate |
| | France | Mr. Bonne |
| | Gabon | Mr. Messone |
| | Germany | Mr. Wittig |
| | India | Mr. Kumar |
| | Lebanon | Mr. Salam |
| | Portugal | Mr. Moraes Cabral |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Pankin |
| | South Africa | Mr. Mashabane |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Sir Mark Lyall Grant |
| | United States of America | Ms. Rice |

## Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abyei (S/2011/603)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

11-53430 (E)

Please recycle

*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan**

**Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abyei (S/2011/603)**

**The President**: Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of South Sudan and the Sudan to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to participate in this meeting. On behalf of the Council, I want to welcome him in his maiden appearance here.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/603, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abyei.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ladsous.

**Mr. Ladsous** (*spoke in French*): I wish to thank you, Madam President, for your kind words addressed to me. I am pleased to be here today for this first Security Council briefing in my capacity as Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

This briefing will focus on the situation in the Abyei Area. The Council has before it the report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/603), which provides an exhaustive overview of the situation there in the past two months. I plan to brief the Council on the most recent developments relating to the security situation on the ground as well as on the status of the deployment of United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) and of political negotiations. I will also present the recommendations of the Secretary-General calling for a modification of the UNISFA mandate aimed at incorporating the border-monitoring mechanism established by the Sudan and South Sudan. I will then respond to questions, should there be any.

The security and humanitarian situation in the region has remained unchanged since June 2011. The humanitarian community continues to assist about 110,000 displaced persons in Agok and in Warrap State, in South Sudan. Unfortunately, the delivery of humanitarian aid remains hampered by flooding and by restrictions on flight authorizations and security clearances. The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement are present in the north and the south, respectively, of the Kiir/Bahr el-Arab river. Although UNISFA has not observed any significant movements across the river or skirmishes between the two forces, tensions remain high.

Mines also remain a cause for concern, as was made clear by the tragic deaths of four Ethiopian soldiers on 2 August following a landmine explosion. With respect to the human rights situation, as has been reported earlier, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights deployed an evaluation mission to Abyei to investigate allegations of human rights abuses following the May hostilities. However, the mission did not receive authorization to go to Abyei.

A total of 1,780 UNISFA troops are currently deployed on the ground, including a small contingent in Kadugli, where, on 2 October, UNISFA took over the logistics base that had been used by the United Nations Mission in the Sudan. Military observers have taken up positions in Abyei, Agok and Diffra. Liaison officers have been designated for deployment to Khartoum and Juba, and a small team is in place to facilitate the mission's deployment. Since 23 August, UNISFA has been patrolling the city of Abyei and Agok, Diffra, Banton and Noon, as well as the main roads. The mission has also undertaken patrols and air reconnaissance operations. It has also undertaken demining operations, pending the deployment of the United Nations Mine Action Service. Preparations have been made to repair the Banton bridge when weather and road conditions improve. As Council members know, the Banton bridge is a strategic point linking the south and the north parts of the Abyei Area. It is therefore essential for the return of displaced persons and also for the delivery of supplies to UNISFA as well as its operations.

We could say that the deployment of UNISFA is an important success story given the many obstacles the mission has faced: delays in the issuance of flight authorizations and road access clearances, which have

led to a shortage of fuel and rations, as well as delays in the issuance of visas and residence permits; and, of course, heavy rains.

We continue to address these problems so as to deploy 900 additional troops by the end of October to strengthen the mission before the migration of Misseriya nomads. In order to enhance our cooperation with the Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan, and in an attempt to resolve operational problems related to the deployment of UNISFA, a consultative mechanism has been established between the United Nations and the Governments of Ethiopia, the Sudan and South Sudan. This quadripartite consultative mechanism held its first meeting on 26 September in New York and was able to make progress in several areas, including land allocation for deployment follow-up, the opening of supply routes and demining. In addition, I spoke with the State Minister of the Sudan and received guarantees as concerns the issuance of visas.

(*spoke in English*)

Council members will recall that, under the terms of the 20 June Agreement on temporary arrangements for the administration and security of the Abyei Area, all armed forces are to withdraw from the area, and UNISFA is to provide the sole military presence in Abyei. The withdrawal is essential to facilitate the return of displaced persons, create conditions for a peaceful Misseriya migration and build confidence among the parties.

Following a lack of progress on the withdrawal of armed forces in July and August, we were encouraged when on 8 September the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee agreed on a timeline for the redeployment of Sudan People's Liberation Army and SAF forces, at a meeting facilitated by the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel, in Addis Ababa. The parties agreed that the withdrawal would begin on 11 September and conclude by 30 September. In recent weeks, the UNISFA Head of Mission, Lieutenant-General Tesfay, has continued to engage the parties on actions required to effect the spirit of the agreement.

Unfortunately, as of today UNISFA has not observed significant progress on the withdrawal of armed forces from the Abyei Area. A second meeting of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee, scheduled for 15 and then 30 September, has been further postponed. On 30 September, according to media reports, a Sudanese Armed Forces spokesperson stated that Sudanese troops will remain in Abyei until UNISFA is fully deployed. The Government of South Sudan accused the Sudan of retaining its troops in order to prevent the return of the displaced. The two parties have yet to make further progress on the formation of the Abyei Area administration, which has been stalled by a disagreement on the chairmanship since early July. In the context of UNISFA's role, a functioning Abyei Area administration is also essential to the establishment of the Abyei police service, which UNISFA is mandated to support.

The lack of progress towards implementation of the 20 June Agreement is of particular concern as we approach the upcoming seasonal migration of the Misseriya. Council members will recall that, due to a number of political and security issues, last year's migration through the Abyei corridor was blocked. In this context, and given the violence of May this year and the fact that the Misseriya will be traversing an international border, we are concerned that this year's migration will be more sensitive and a test of the relationship between the two countries. It could become a potential source of serious tensions in the Abyei Area if armed forces remain in place and the Ngok Dinka internally displaced persons are unable to return before the end of the planting season, which has already begun.

UNISFA is already being configured to provide support, within its capacities, for a peaceful migration and the protection of civilians, but the mission's best efforts cannot compensate for the progress urgently needed on the political track. The parties must therefore redouble their commitments to withdrawing their armed forces, establishing the joint administration and allowing recovery and reconciliation efforts in Abyei to begin.

Council members will recall that on 30 July, the Sudan and South Sudan signed the latest in a series of agreements on the border, recommitting themselves to the establishment of a border monitoring mechanism and envisaging a key supporting role for UNISFA. In line with this Agreement, Lieutenant General Tesfay conducted a reconnaissance mission with both parties in early August, to define the possible structure and modalities of a border monitoring support mission. The results were discussed during a meeting of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism on 18 September, under the chairmanship of President Thabo Mbeki.

While that meeting did not deliver a formal agreement on all the technical details, it was held in a constructive atmosphere, and we hope that the locations of the team sites and mission headquarters will be formalized at the next meeting, which will take place in Juba on 18 October.

On the basis of these positive developments, the Secretary-General has proposed an amendment of UNISFA's mandate to incorporate support for the border monitoring mechanism and implementation of the parties' security commitments along the border, under a Chapter VI mandate. As laid out in detail in the report, UNISFA's new tasks would include support for the operational activities of the parties along the safe demilitarized border zone, such as verification, investigations, monitoring, arbitration, coordination, information exchange and patrols, as well as the maintenance of charts and maps, liaison between the parties and support for capacity-building for effective bilateral management mechanisms along the border. We propose that this be achieved within the existing troop strength of 4,200 military personnel.

Our proposal envisages the reconfiguration of UNISFA into two pillars with separate and distinct sets of tasks, albeit of course under a common leadership and management structure. The new pillar would comprise a dedicated capacity of 297 force protection, 90 military observers — subject to a final agreement between the parties on the number of team sites — and 146 enabling elements for support to the border mechanism. These elements would be deployed into four joint border verification and monitoring sectors, each comprising a sector headquarters and up to 10 permanent joint border verification monitoring teams composed of personnel from the Sudan, South Sudan and UNISFA, under a UNISFA lead. The mission would avail of existing operating bases, assets, infrastructure and supply routes established by the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan and UNISFA.

In order for UNISFA to deliver this support to the border mechanism, a number of conditions must be in place. First, it is critical that the parties continue to move forward to formalize the technical arrangements of the border mechanism, including the locations of the team sites and headquarters. Secondly, UNISFA must have the full support of the Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan, including unrestricted freedom of movement by air and land and full cooperation for the deployment of the mission's remaining troops. Thirdly, given the fact that the border is 2,100 kilometres long, and due to limited road infrastructure, UNISFA will also require additional air assets, including four utility helicopters and two specialized reconnaissance fixed-wing aircraft. I urge the Council to work with the parties to ensure that the conditions for successful implementation of the mandate are in place.

The two Governments have shown that they can come together to make progress, most recently in relation to the border. International engagement towards the implementation of existing commitments is therefore essential to building trust and fostering an environment conducive to the negotiation on the final status of Abyei. It is in this spirit that I would encourage the Council first, to authorize UNISFA support for the establishment of the border monitoring mechanism, and secondly, to engage the parties on the withdrawal of their forces from Abyei so as to enable internally displaced persons to return and ensure a peaceful migration in order to prevent a serious deterioration of the situation in the coming months.

(*spoke in French*)

In closing, I would like to thank the Government of Ethiopia for its commitment to UNISFA and to its troops for their proactive efforts to deploy and to start implementing the mandate in very challenging circumstances.

**The President**: I thank Mr. Ladsous for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

**Mr. Osman** (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like once again to congratulate you, Madame, on your accession to the presidency of the Security Council for this month. Your country is an African friend of the Sudan and has contributed significantly to the maintenance of international and regional peace and security, particularly on our mother continent, Africa, and in my country, the Sudan. The Darfur peace negotiations were launched in Abuja, the capital of your country.

Through you, I should like once again to extend our sincere condolences to the Government and people of Ethiopia for the death of four Ethiopian soldiers in a landmine explosion on 2 August in the Mabok region, east of Abyei.

I also reiterate my congratulations to Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, on his well-deserved appointment. I wish him every success in his new endeavours and stress our commitment to cooperating with him in that regard, just as we enjoyed close cooperation with his predecessor, Mr. Le Roy.

The report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abyei (S/2011/603) states, in paragraph 2, that the security situation in the Abyei region remained calm during the reporting period. In paragraph 6, the report also mentions that progress has been made towards implementing the 20 June Agreement between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, which, inter alia, provided for the important need to negotiate so as to achieve a political settlement on the implementation of the outstanding elements of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. All of these are indicators of our Government's resolve to settle all pending matters through political dialogue.

With regard to the deployment of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), I would like to assure the Council that the Government of the Sudan is keen to expedite the deployment and facilitation of the work of the Force. A case in point is that the first phase of deployment was completed in September. A total of 1,798 personnel of the mandated troop strength of 4,200 were deployed. The Government of the Sudan has stated its commitment to facilitate the second phase of deployment through its participation in a meeting of the mission's quadripartite consultative mechanism, held in New York on 26 September. All aspects related to the deployment of the Force were discussed, including special measures to secure land for the construction of its premises, as well as supply lines, necessary logistics and the civilian support component of the Force. These details indicate that the two parties are firmly resolved to press ahead with the completion of the deployment of the Force.

The recommendation to amend the mandate of UNIFSA to provide force protection for the border monitoring mechanism is in itself a positive development. It shows the Council that the Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan are indeed cooperating, having agreed to establish a border monitoring mechanism to ensure that their accessible borders allow for the movement of citizens and trade between the two brotherly countries. Again, this is a positive development that demonstrates the constructive steps taken by both parties to contain outstanding issues and to push ahead with efforts to substantially increase cooperation.

Therefore, as Council members discuss the expansion of the mission's mandate, we trust that it will take decisions in accordance with the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report. I would like to recall here the recommendation that border monitoring personnel consist of some 300 personnel, within the mission's current authorized troop strength of 4,200, in compliance with Security Council resolution 1990 (2011).

The report before the Council recommends, in paragraph 25, that UNIFSA be reconfigured in order to establish a dedicated capacity for the border mechanism, including 297 force protection personnel, 90 military observers and 146 enabling elements. We trust that the Council will adhere to the recommendations contained in paragraph 24 of the report, which establishes that the troops are mandated under Chapter VI of the United Nations Charter, and which indicates, as I mentioned, that the purpose is to make the borders accessible and facilitate the movement of citizens and trade between the two countries.

Concerning the withdrawal of the forces of the two parties to outside the Abyei Area, in my previous statements to the Council I indicated that the Sudanese Armed Forces did not enter Abyei so as to remain there. Today I reiterate that they will not stay in Abyei ad infinitum; they will be pulled out. However, the withdrawal that we meant should be organized in concurrence with the completion of the deployment of the Ethiopian forces, so as to avoid a security vacuum. This is a genuine concern of the Council. In that connection, I would like to share with the Council that, owing to the heavy rainfall typical of the fall season in the region and the lack of paved roads, as Mr. Ladsous said moments ago, this may be an obstacle to the movement of vehicles and cars transporting UNIFSA personnel. We hope that this will be taken into account when the Council discusses the withdrawal of forces. These are obstacles beyond our control that are imposed by weather conditions in the Area. They are ad hoc conditions.

In conclusion, we wish to reiterate our gratitude to the sisterly State of Ethiopia, as well as to Mr. Thabo Mbeki, head of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, and Mr. Haile Menkerios, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General. Once again, we would like to reiterate our commitment to facilitate the deployment of these forces and to extend the necessary support to them.

Finally, I have three brief observations. First, with regard to visas, I wish to say to the Council that a commitment has been made to grant visas to all UNISFA personnel. To date, we at our Mission have issued visas to all who have requested them, including a number of diplomatic missions concerned with the deployment of UNISFA.

My second point has to do with the visit to Khartoum this Saturday by President Salva Kiir of South Sudan to meet with President Omer Hassan Al-Bashir. We look forward to that meeting and hope that it will take place in an atmosphere of good faith to contain and resolve all remaining problems. I hope that such an environment is taken into consideration as we discuss here all the matters pending before us.

Lastly, with regard to internally displaced persons, it is our hope that, given that a force of more than 1,700 has now been deployed, those people will begin to return to their areas. That would send a positive message with regard to the success of the mission.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of South Sudan.

**Mr. Choat** (South Sudan): The Republic of South Sudan welcomes the report (S/2011/603) of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abyei. We also express our thanks to the Government of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia for providing troops to the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei, as well as for its continuous efforts in support of peace and stability in the region.

As the Secretary-General notes in his report, the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee, comprised of senior representatives from the Republic of the Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan, met for the first time on 7 and 8 September in Addis Ababa, in the presence of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel and the United Nations. At that meeting, the members of the Committee agreed and signed a detailed timetable for the withdrawal of all troops from the Abyei Area.

In compliance with the provisions of the Addis Ababa agreement, Sudan People's Liberation Army forces withdrew from the Abyei Area and redeployed to Warrap State. Subsequent to the issuance of the Secretary-General's report, the Force Commander confirmed that SPLA forces had complied with the agreed withdrawal plan. As of today, Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) troops have not withdrawn from the Abyei Area, despite the clear timeline agreed at the meeting of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee, which was signed by senior representatives of the Government of the Republic of the Sudan.

The SAF must now withdraw immediately and unconditionally from the Abyei Area. We respectfully request the Council to set a deadline for that withdrawal, and to hold whoever violates it accountable. In that regard, we are also concerned that the Republic of the Sudan has stated that the SAF cannot withdraw from Abyei unless the Area institutions are established. While establishing those institutions is necessary, in no agreement between the parties is the withdrawal of troops conditional upon their establishment.

The Republic of South Sudan underlines that it is ready to continue serious negotiations with the Republic of the Sudan on all outstanding issues. My Government seeks lasting peace in Abyei. We wish to see the security situation on the ground stabilized in order to enable the peaceful return of civilians.

We thank the Council for its continued support for peace and stability in the region. We stand ready to continue cooperation with the Council, the United Nations peacekeeping missions, the African Union, regional partners and the international community in support of that purpose.

**The President**: I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

*The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.*